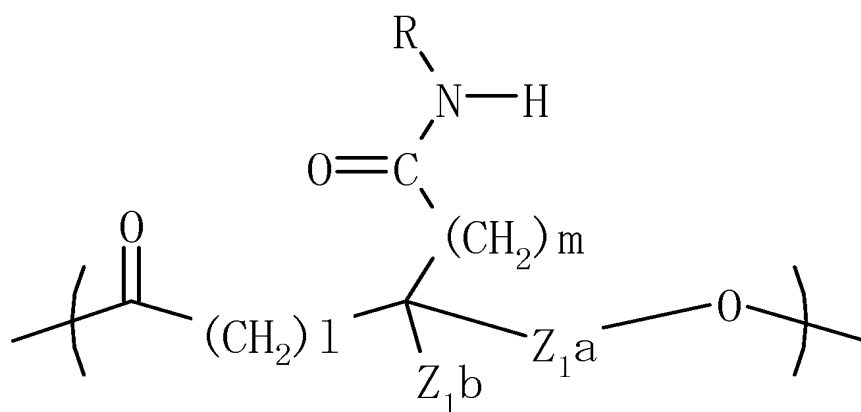


IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claim 1 as shown below.

1. (Currently Amended) A charge control agent for controlling a charged state of powder, characterized by comprising one or more units each represented by the following chemical formula (1) in a molecule:



(in the formula:

R represents -A₁-SO₂R₁;

R₁ represents OH, a halogen atom, ONa, OK, or OR_{1a}; ~~and~~

R_{1a} and A₁ each independently represent a group having a substituted or unsubstituted aliphatic hydrocarbon structure, a substituted or unsubstituted aromatic ring structure, or a substituted or unsubstituted heterocyclic structure; and

wherein 1 is an integer selected from 0 to 4;

in addition, with regard to 1, m, Z_{1a}, and Z_{1b} in the formula:

when 1 represents an integer selected from 2 to 4, Z_{1a} represents nothing or a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, Z_{1b} represents a hydrogen atom, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

when l represents 1 and Z_{1a} represents a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, Z_{1b} represents a hydrogen atom and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

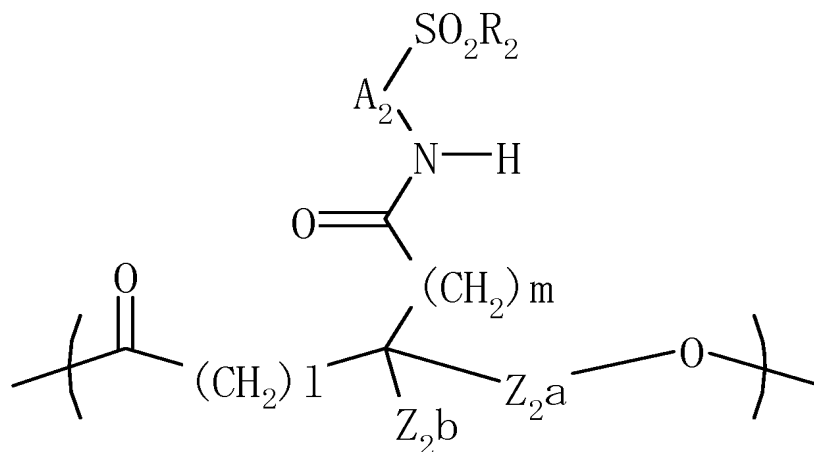
when l represents 1 and Z_{1a} represents nothing, Z_{1b} represents a hydrogen atom and m represents 0;

when l represents 0 and Z_{1a} represents a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, the linear alkylene chain may be substituted by a linear or branched alkyl group, or an alkyl group containing a residue having any one of a phenyl structure, a thienyl structure, and a cyclohexyl structure at a terminal thereof, Z_{1b} represents a hydrogen atom, or a linear or branched alkyl group, aryl group, or aralkyl group which may be substituted by an aryl group, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8; and

when l represents 0 and Z_{1a} represents nothing, Z_{1b} represents a hydrogen atom, or a linear or branched alkyl group, aryl group, or aralkyl group which may be substituted by an aryl group, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

in addition, when multiple units exist, R, R₁, R_{1a}, A₁, Z_{1a}, Z_{1b}, l, and m each independently have the above meaning for each unit.)

2. (Original) A charge control agent according to claim 1, characterized in that the one or more units each represented by the chemical formula (1) are each represented by the following chemical formula (2):



(in the formula:

R_2 represents OH, a halogen atom, ONa, OK, or OR_{2a} ; and

R_{2a} represents a linear or branched alkyl group having 1 to 8 carbon atoms, or a substituted or unsubstituted phenyl group, and A_2 represents a linear or branched alkylene group having 1 to 8 carbon atoms;

in addition, with regard to l , m , Z_{2a} , and Z_{2b} in the formula:

when l represents an integer selected from 2 to 4, Z_{2a} represents nothing or a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, Z_{2b} represents a hydrogen atom, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

when l represents 1 and Z_{2a} represents a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, Z_{2b} represents a hydrogen atom and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

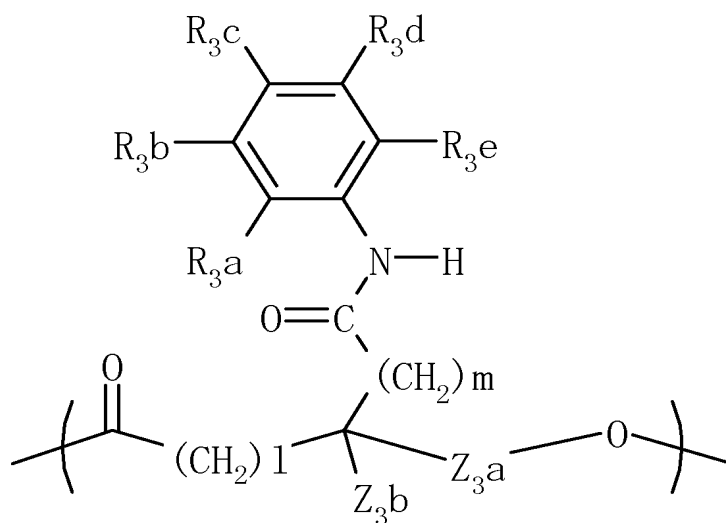
when l represents 1 and Z_{2a} represents nothing, Z_{2b} represents a hydrogen atom and m represents 0;

when l represents 0 and Z_{2a} represents a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, the linear alkylene chain may be substituted by a linear or branched alkyl group, or an alkyl group containing a residue having any one of a phenyl structure, a thienyl structure, and a cyclohexyl structure at a terminal thereof, Z_{2b} represents a hydrogen atom, or a linear or branched alkyl group, aryl group, or aralkyl group which may be substituted by an aryl group, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8; and

when l represents 0 and Z_{2a} represents nothing, Z_{2b} represents a hydrogen atom, or a linear or branched alkyl group, aryl group, or aralkyl group which may be substituted by an aryl group, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

in addition, when multiple units exist, R₂, R_{2a}, A₂, Z_{2a}, Z_{2b}, l, and m each independently have the above meaning for each unit.)

3. (Previously Presented) A charge control agent according to claim 1, characterized in that the one or more units each represented by the chemical formula (1) are each represented by the following chemical formula (3):



(in the formula, at least one of R_{3a} , R_{3b} , R_{3c} , R_{3d} , and R_{3e} represents SO_2R_{3f} (R_{3f} represents OH, a halogen atom, ONa, OK, or OR_{3f1} , R_{3f1} represents a linear or branched alkyl group having 1 to 8 carbon atoms, or a substituted or unsubstituted phenyl group), and the others each independently represent a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, an alkyl group having 1 to 20 carbon atoms, an alkoxy group having 1 to 20 carbon atoms, an OH group, an NH_2 group, an NO_2 group, $COOR_{3g}$ (R_{3g} represents an H atom, an Na atom, or a K atom), an acetamide group, an OPh group, an NPh group, a CF_3 group, a C_2F_5 group, or a C_3F_7 group;

in addition, with regard to l, m, Z_{3a} , and Z_{3b} in the formula:

when l represents an integer selected from 2 to 4, Z_{3a} represents nothing or a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, Z_{3b} represents a hydrogen atom, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

when l represents 1 and Z_{3a} represents a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, Z_{3b} represents a hydrogen atom and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

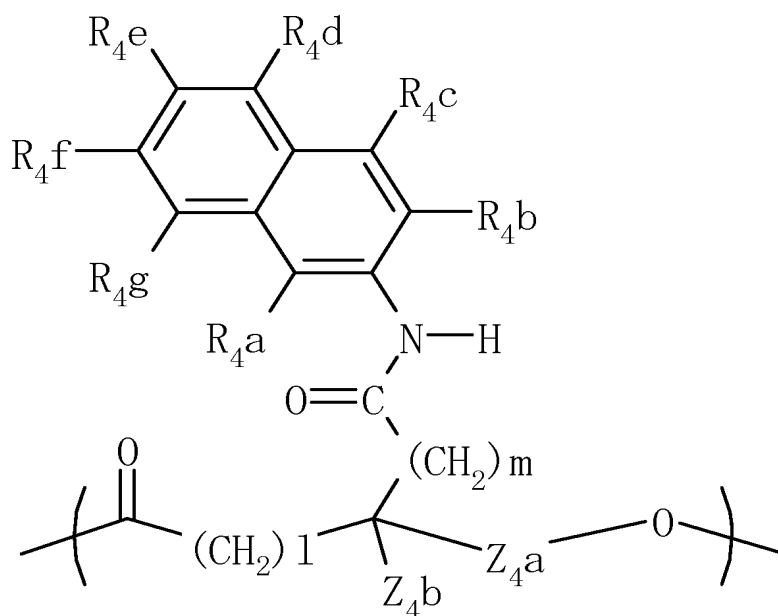
when l represents 1 and Z_{3a} represents nothing, Z_{3b} represents a hydrogen atom and m represents 0;

when l represents 0 and Z_{3a} represents a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, the linear alkylene chain may be substituted by a linear or branched alkyl group, or an alkyl group containing a residue having any one of a phenyl structure, a thienyl structure, and a cyclohexyl structure at a terminal thereof, Z_{3b} represents a hydrogen atom, or a linear or branched alkyl group, aryl group, or aralkyl group which may be substituted by an aryl group, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8; and

when l represents 0 and Z_{3a} represents nothing, Z_{3b} represents a hydrogen atom, or a linear or branched alkyl group, aryl group, or aralkyl group which may be substituted by an aryl group, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

in addition, when multiple units exist, R_{3a} , R_{3b} , R_{3c} , R_{3d} , R_{3e} , R_{3f} , R_{3f1} , R_{3g} , Z_{3a} , Z_{3b} , l, and m each independently have the above meaning for each unit.)

4. (Previously Presented) A charge control agent according to claim 1, characterized in that the one or more units each represented by the chemical formula (1) are each represented by the following chemical formula (4A) or (4B):



(in the formula, at least one of R_{4a} , R_{4b} , R_{4c} , R_{4d} , R_{4e} , R_{4f} , and R_{4g} represents SO_2R_{4o} (R_{4o} represents OH, a halogen atom, ONa, OK, or OR_{4o1} , R_{4o1} represents a linear or branched alkyl group having 1 to 8 carbon atoms, or a substituted or unsubstituted phenyl group), and the others each independently represent a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, an alkyl

group having 1 to 20 carbon atoms, an alkoxy group having 1 to 20 carbon atoms, an OH group, an NH₂ group, an NO₂ group, COOR_{4p} (R_{4p} represents an H atom, an Na atom, or a K atom), an acetamide group, an OPh group, an NHPH group, a CF₃ group, a C₂F₅ group, or a C₃F₇ group;

in addition, with regard to l, m, Z_{4a}, and Z_{4b} in the formula:

when l represents an integer selected from 2 to 4, Z_{4a} represents nothing or a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, Z_{4b} represents a hydrogen atom, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

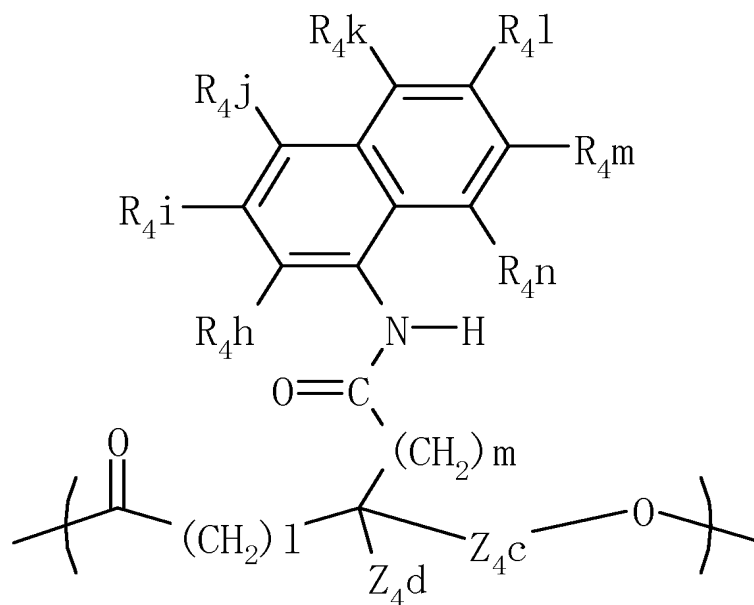
when l represents 1 and Z_{4a} represents a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, Z_{4b} represents a hydrogen atom and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

when l represents 1 and Z_{4a} represents nothing, Z_{4b} represents a hydrogen atom and m represents 0;

when l represents 0 and Z_{4a} represents a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, the linear alkylene chain may be substituted by a linear or branched alkyl group, or an alkyl group containing a residue having any one of a phenyl structure, a thienyl structure, and a cyclohexyl structure at a terminal thereof, Z_{4b} represents a hydrogen atom, or a linear or branched alkyl group, aryl group, or aralkyl group which may be substituted by an aryl group, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8; and

when l represents 0 and Z_{4a} represents nothing, Z_{4b} represents a hydrogen atom, or a linear or branched alkyl group, aryl group, or aralkyl group which may be substituted by an aryl group, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

in addition, when multiple units exist, R_{4a} , R_{4b} , R_{4c} , R_{4d} , R_{4e} , R_{4f} , R_{4g} , R_{4o} , OR_{4o1} , R_{4p} , Z_{4a} , Z_{4b} , l , and m each independently have the above meaning for each unit)



(in the formula, at least one of R_{4h} , R_{4i} , R_{4j} , R_{4k} , R_{4l} , R_{4m} , and R_{4n} represents SO_2R_{4o} (R_{4o} represents OH, a halogen atom, ONa, OK, or OR_{4o1} , R_{4o1} represents a linear or branched alkyl group having 1 to 8 carbon atoms, or a substituted or unsubstituted phenyl group), and the others each independently represent a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, an alkyl group having 1 to 20 carbon atoms, an alkoxy group having 1 to 20 carbon atoms, an OH group, an NH_2 group, an NO_2 group, $COOR_{4p}$ (R_{4p} represents an H atom, an Na atom, or a K atom), an acetamide group, an OPh group, an NPh group, a CF_3 group, a C_2F_5 group, or a C_3F_7 group;

in addition, with regard to l , m , Z_{4c} , and Z_{4d} in the formula:

when l represents an integer selected from 2 to 4, Z_{4c} represents nothing or a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, Z_{4d} represents a hydrogen atom, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

when l represents 1 and Z_{4c} represents a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, Z_{4d} represents a hydrogen atom and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

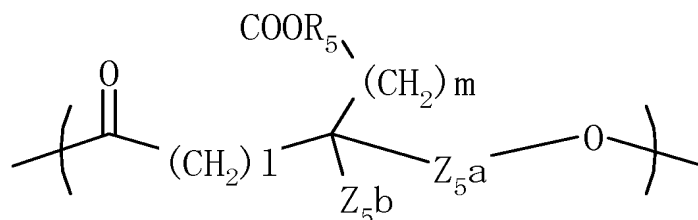
when l represents 1 and Z_{4c} represents nothing, Z_{4d} represents a hydrogen atom and m represents 0;

when l represents 0 and Z_{4c} represents a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, the linear alkylene chain may be substituted by a linear or branched alkyl group, or an alkyl group containing a residue having any one of a phenyl structure, a thienyl structure, and a cyclohexyl structure at a terminal thereof, Z_{4d} represents a hydrogen atom, or a linear or branched alkyl group, aryl group, or aralkyl group which may be substituted by an aryl group, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8; and

when l represents 0 and Z_{4c} represents nothing, Z_{4d} represents a hydrogen atom, or a linear or branched alkyl group, aryl group, or aralkyl group which may be substituted by an aryl group, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

in addition, when multiple units exist, R_{4h} , R_{4i} , R_{4j} , R_{4k} , R_{4l} , R_{4m} , R_{4n} , R_{4o} , OR_{4o1} , R_{4p} , Z_{4c} , Z_{4d} , l, and m each independently have the above meaning for each unit.)

5. (Withdrawn) A charge control agent for controlling a charged state of powder, characterized by comprising one or more units each represented by the following chemical formula (5) in a molecule:



(in the formula:

R_5 represents hydrogen, a group for forming a salt, or R_{5a} , and R_{5a} represents a linear or branched alkyl group having 1 to 12 carbon atoms, or aralkyl group;

in addition, with regard to l , m , Z_{5a} , and Z_{5b} in the formula:

when l represents an integer selected from 2 to 4, Z_{5a} represents nothing or a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, Z_{5b} represents a hydrogen atom, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

when l represents 1 and Z_{5a} represents a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, Z_{5b} represents a hydrogen atom and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

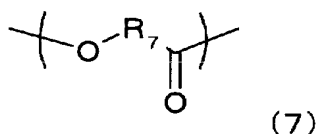
when l represents 1 and Z_{5a} represents nothing, Z_{5b} represents a hydrogen atom and m represents 0;

when l represents 0 and Z_{5a} represents a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, the linear alkylene chain may be substituted by a linear or branched alkyl group, or an alkyl group containing a residue having any one of a phenyl structure, a thienyl structure, and a cyclohexyl structure at a terminal thereof, Z_{5b} represents a hydrogen atom, or a linear or branched alkyl group, aryl group, or aralkyl group which may be substituted by an aryl group, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8; and

when l represents 0 and Z_{5a} represents nothing, Z_{5b} represents a hydrogen atom, or a linear or branched alkyl group, aryl group, or aralkyl group which may be substituted by an aryl group, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

in addition, when multiple units exist, R₅, R_{5a}, Z_{5a}, Z_{5b}, l, and m each independently have the above meaning for each unit.)

6. (Previously Presented) A charge control agent according to claim 1, characterized by further comprising a unit represented by the following chemical formula (7) in a molecule:



(in the formula, R₇ represents a linear or branched alkylene group having 1 to 11 carbon atoms, an alkyleneoxyalkylene group each alkylene of which has 1 to 2 carbon atoms, or an alkylidene group having 1 to 5 carbon atoms which may be substituted by aryl as desired;

in addition, when multiple units exist, R₇ independently has the above meaning for each unit.)

7. (Previously Presented) A charge control agent according to claim 1, wherein the powder comprises toner for developing an electrostatic charge image.

8. (Previously Presented) A toner for developing an electrostatic charge image, characterized by comprising at least:

a binder resin;

a colorant; and

the charge control agent according to claim 1.

9. (Previously Presented) An image forming method, comprising at least the steps of:

applying a voltage from an outside to a charging member to charge an electrostatic latent image-bearing member;

forming an electrostatic charge image on the charged electrostatic latent image-bearing member;

developing the electrostatic charge image with the toner of claim 8 for developing an electrostatic charge image to form a toner image on the electrostatic latent image-bearing member;

transferring the toner image on the electrostatic latent image-bearing member onto a recording material; and

fixing the toner image on the recording material under heating.

10. (Previously Presented) An image forming apparatus, comprising at least:

means for applying a voltage from an outside to a charging member to charge an electrostatic latent image-bearing member;

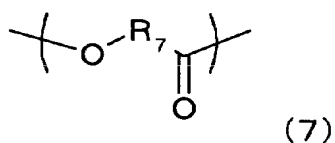
means for forming an electrostatic charge image on the charged electrostatic latent image-bearing member;

means for developing the electrostatic charge image with the toner of claim 8 for developing an electrostatic charge image to form a toner image on the electrostatic latent image-bearing member;

means for transferring the toner image on the electrostatic latent image-bearing member onto a recording material; and

means for fixing the toner image on the recording material under heating.

11. (Withdrawn) A charge control agent according to claim 5, characterized by further comprising a unit represented by the following chemical formula (7) in a molecule:



in the formula, R₇ represents a linear or branched alkylene group having 1 to 11 carbon atoms, an alkyleneoxyalkylene group each alkylene of which has 1 to 2 carbon atoms, or an alkylidene group having 1 to 5 carbon atoms which is optionally substituted by aryl;

wherein when multiple units exist, R₇ independently has the above meaning for each unit.

12. (Withdrawn) A charge control agent according to claim 5, wherein the powder comprises toner for developing an electrostatic charge image.

13. (Withdrawn) A toner for developing an electrostatic charge image, characterized by comprising at least:

a binder resin;

a colorant; and

the charge control agent according to claim 5.

14. (Withdrawn) An image forming method, comprising at least the steps of:

applying a voltage from an outside to a charging member to charge an electrostatic latent image-bearing member;

forming an electrostatic charge image on the charged electrostatic latent image-bearing member;

developing the electrostatic charge image with the toner of claim 13 for developing an electrostatic charge image to form a toner image on the electrostatic latent image-bearing member;

transferring the toner image on the electrostatic latent image-bearing member onto a recording material; and

fixing the toner image on the recording material under heating.

15. (Withdrawn) An image forming apparatus, comprising at least:

means for applying a voltage from an outside to a charging member to charge an electrostatic latent image-bearing member;

means for forming an electrostatic charge image on the charged electrostatic latent image-bearing member;

means for developing the electrostatic charge image with the toner of claim 13 for developing an electrostatic charge image to form a toner image on the electrostatic latent image-bearing member;

means for transferring the toner image on the electrostatic latent image-bearing member onto a recording material; and

means for fixing the toner image on the recording material under heating.